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EDITOR: ZLLEH
SCANNER: ICHIJO

masamune shirow's

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PART 6

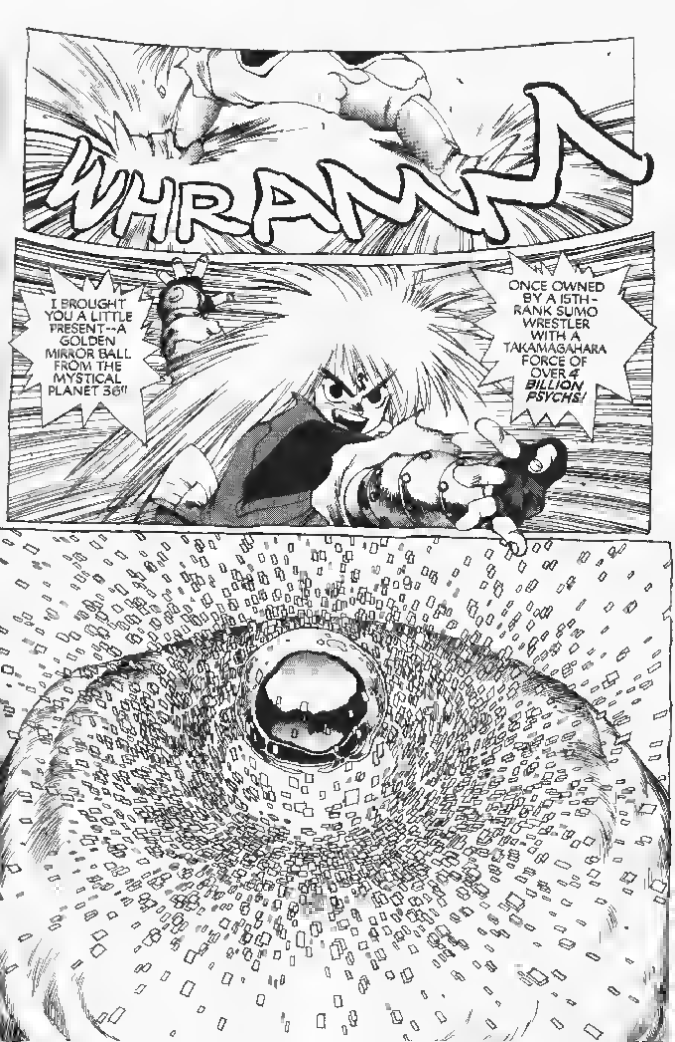
STORY AND ART
masamune shirow

TRANSLATION
frederik l. schodt
and toren smith

LETTERING/RETOUCH
tom orzechowski,
molly kiely and susie lee

EDITOR
john weeks

HYAIEEEEEE
HA HA!
SWOOSH
SU.. SUSANO?!
B-B-B-B-BUT HOW?!


WHRAMM
I BROUGHT YOU A LITTLE PRESENT--A GOLDEN MIRROR BALL FROM THE MYSTICAL PLANET 36!!
ONCE OWNED BY A 15TH-RANK SUMO WRESTLER WITH A TAKAMAGAHARA FORCE OF OVER 4 BILLION PSYCHS!

YAIEE!
WHAT'S GOING ON? THE WHOLE VAJRA CUSP'S WARPING?
SUSANO! ARE YOU TRYING TO SUCK THE SUPERNAGA INTO THE HEAVENS?
WELL NOT WHILE I'M AROUND!
BEHOLD YOUR REWARD A TRUE GOD-FORCE!

HELP MEEE!
HYAAA!!
UMPH!
HA!!
BKAM!
KRAK
SIZZ
SPIZZ
SOIZZ
HOW CAN HE RESIST A DHARMA SEAL AND A POWER-QUATION ?!

HA
HA
HA
HA
HA
HA!
WHAT HAPPENED?! I DON'T BELIEVE THIS!
WHA?!
WAIT A SEC! NOW I GET IT! I LEFT SOMETHING OUT!
IDIOT!!
THAT'S NOT IT AT ALL!!

I WAS FIRST BROUGHT HERE IN SUMMON MODE AND SENT BACK WITH A DHARMA SEAL AND POWER-QUATION ...
BUT THIS TIME I CAME ON MY OWN!! THINGS ARE DIFFERENT THIS TIME AROUND, KIDDO!
ON YOUR OWN?!
DAMN RIGHT! AND THE OCTOTRIGRAM OF ME THAT YOU FED TO THE SUPERNAGA EARLIER WAS NO ORDINARY OCTOTRIGRAM!
IT'S AN AQUA-LOCO TYPE WITH A TWISTED HYDRO-ELEMENT AN INCREDIBLY POWERFUL VAJRA-NAGA FORCE ON THIS PLANET IN SIXTY FOUR HARMONICS IT'LL REACH THRESHOLD AND EVERYTHING WILL DISINTEGRATE!!
OH NOO!!
FAME AND FORTUNE
WAAAH! WAIT!
NYA HA HA!!
SMAK SMAK
NYAHH NYAHH NYAHH

SMAK
DAMN YOU, SUSANO!
YOU WON'T GET AWAY WITH THIS!
WHOO
SHSS
BOMF
I WON
I WON
WHROOOOOM
SSSHSSSHHSS
JUST YOU WAIT! ANY WARPING OF THE HYDRO-ELEMENT IN THE OCTO-TRIGRAM CAN BE CORRECTED WITH NAGA FORCE!
HE'S NOT LISTEN-ING...

WHDD
WHDD
YEEK!
OMMMMMM
THE HYDRO ELEMENT REALLY IS WARPED
ALL THE WAY UP TO THE FOURTH OCTAVE! WAAAH!
WELL THAT CONCLUDES MY VICTORY DANCE
NEXT, TO MAKE SURE THE SUPERNAGA DISPERSES PROPERLY, I'LL JUST HAVE TO JUMP RIGHT IN AND CLEAN THINGS UP...
YOU'RE GOING TO WHAT?!?
WHA-?!
HYA!
WHOOOSH

WHOOSHH
EEK!
OH NO!! THERE'S A TEAR IN THE DHARMA SEAL!
KSSSSHHHH
WHSSSHH

WHAT THE HELL'S GOING ON? I CAN'T SEE A DAMN THING!
IF I TRANSFORM AT THE SAME RATIO AS EACH OF THE EIGHT POLES MAYBE I CAN SYNCH WITH THEM
GYERKK
TO THE RIGHT
WHAT TH—?!
Pop

!
HMPH I THOUGHT THINGS WOULD LOOK A LOT WORSE IN THIS FORCE FIELD!
SO THIS IS THE GARBAGE THAT HUMAN KARMIC LUST HAS GENERATED!

GOTTA ADMIT I'M SURPRISED— I DIDN'T THINK THAT COUPLING NAGA FORCE AND HUMAN DESIRE IN PSYCHOSCIENCE WOULD RESULT IN SO MUCH JUNK...
NOW I GET IT. THAT WEIRD BUG-LIKE THING'S SUSANO !!
TAKE THIS, FLEA BRAIN !
BSSHH
BOING
BOING
WHRAMM!
WHAT TH' HECK ?!
UH OH... I SHOULDN'T JUMP AROUND LIKE THAT--THE FIRE AND METAL ELEMENTS ARE MORE WARPED NOW THAN EVER...!

!
SKLOOFSHH
GASP
Ahhh
YAIRRG!
WAIT A SEC!
THIS IS NO TIME TO RELAX!
FUEEN!
Pop
whuh?
UH
YOU LOOK A LITTLE DIFFERENT MASTER
YOU REALIZE IT BECAUSE YOU'RE MORE SPIRITUALLY ADVANCED THAN YOUR DAUGHTER EH?*

!
THWOOOSSH
UH, LORD SUSANO, SIR... IT'S A LITTLE HARD TO TALK TO YOU IF I CAN'T SEE YOU...
ER...
HEH HEH

WH-
BOOM
YEEP!
I GUESS THIS MUST BE A MANIFESTATION OF SUSANOO'S APPETITE
IN FORTY HARMONICS THE NAGA REACTOR'LL BE SCATTERED ALL OVER THE GALAXY.
BUT BEFORE THAT WE'VE GOTTA SEPARATE THE NAGAS AND GODS LINKED TO KARMIC DESIRE, OR WE'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO RESTORE THIS PLANET TO ITS ORIGINAL STATE...
WHAT'S THE PROBLEM? YOU'RE NOT PAYING ATTENTION!
BUT THERE MUST BE BILLIONS OF THEM... HOW CAN WE DO ALL THAT IN 40 HARMONICS?
PRINCESS KUSHINATA IS HOLDING THE NAGA REACTOR TOGETHER. NOW, ONCE WE SEPARATE HER GOD-FORCE FROM IT, EVERYTHING ELSE'LL TAKE CARE OF ITSELF.

WANT ME TO SHOW YOU A SHORT CUT TO HER, SIR?
THAT WOULD BE EXCELLENT!
WHERE IS SHE?
IF YOU DIVE DOWN TO THE FOURTH OCTAVE OF THAT BAD KARMA CESSPOOL, I THINK YOU CAN CONTACT HER
GOOD! I'LL GO LOOK FOR OUR LOTUS PRINCESS THEN!
BRGG
GLMPHH
FRPBLL
EH HEH
MIND IF I WAIT HERE?
TOO LATE TO TURN BACK NOW, FUZEN!

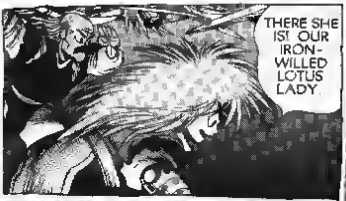
NOOO!
EVERYTHING KEEPS GETTING WORSE!!
DAMN! SUSANO! HE'S TAKING A SHORT CUT THROUGH THE SECOND OCTAVE!
I'LL SHOW HIM
LET ME GO!!
WE MADE IT THROUGH THE CESS-POOL TO THE THIRD OCTAVE!
MM?

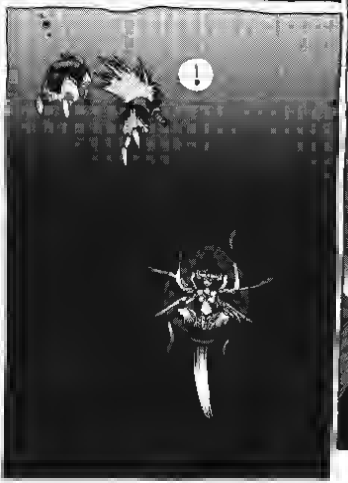
WE CAN'T STAY HERE LONG, OR MY SPIRIT'LL HAVE A NEGATIVE EFFECT ON THESE DEMONS...
WE'VE GOTTA FIND A WAY DOWN TO THE FOURTH OCTAVE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE...
THIS MUST BE IT!!
WHOOSH

BZZKKK
YE GODS! HE'S ALREADY MADE IT THROUGH!
AND THE FOURTH OCTAVE'S WARPING FROM HIS FORCEFIELD !!
BUT THERE'S A QUASI-DEITY BLOCKING HIS PATH !
WELL WELL! IF IT ISN'T TSUMU-KARI, THE SWORD GOD !!
SOUNDS LIKE SUSANO YES ?!
FORGIVE ME FOR MY EARLIER RUDENESS
IT WAS ALL MY FAULT PLEASE ACCEPT MY APOLOGIES
KSHHH

HMPH! WELL THERE IS SOMETHING YOU CAN DO FOR ME
I NEED YOUR HELP
HYAH!
AT YOUR SERVICE, SIR.
!
BECOME MY SWORD!
WHERE'D HE GO?
I WAS GOING TO MAKE MINCEMEAT OUT OF HIM WITH TSUMUKARI!
© COMMAND CODE ARTIFACT

UH, OH!


THERE SHE IS! OUR IRON-WILLED LOTUS LADY.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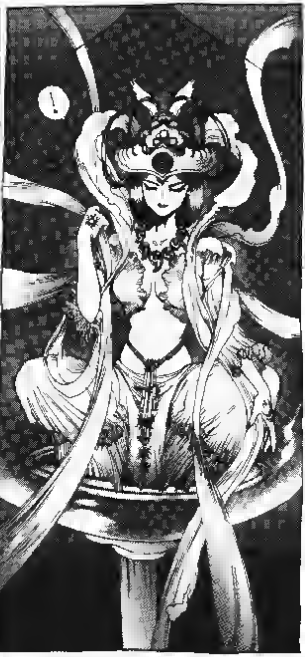
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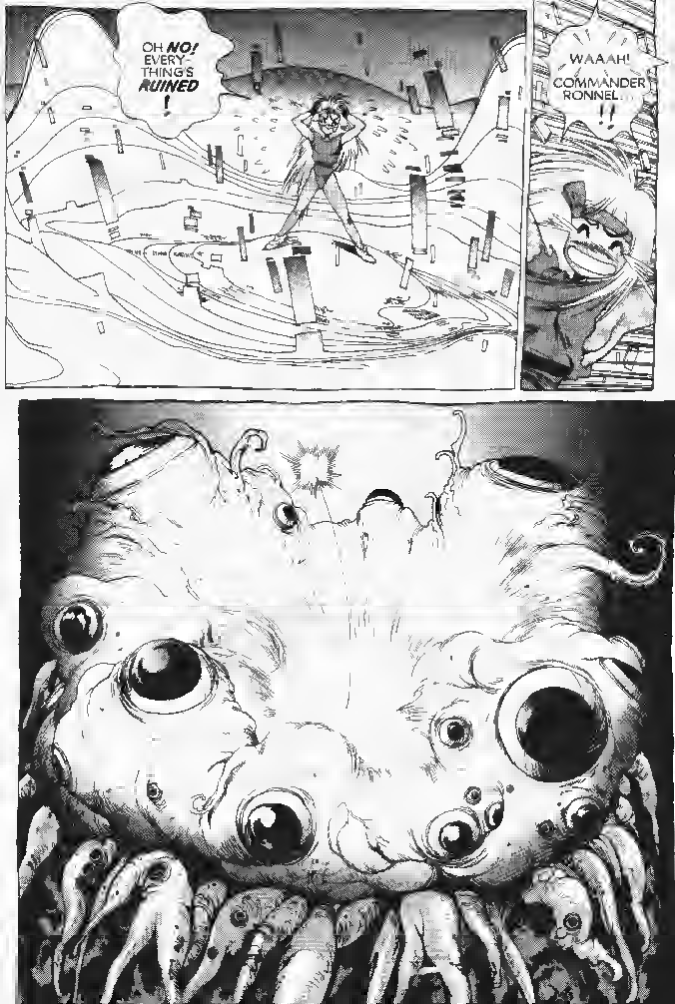
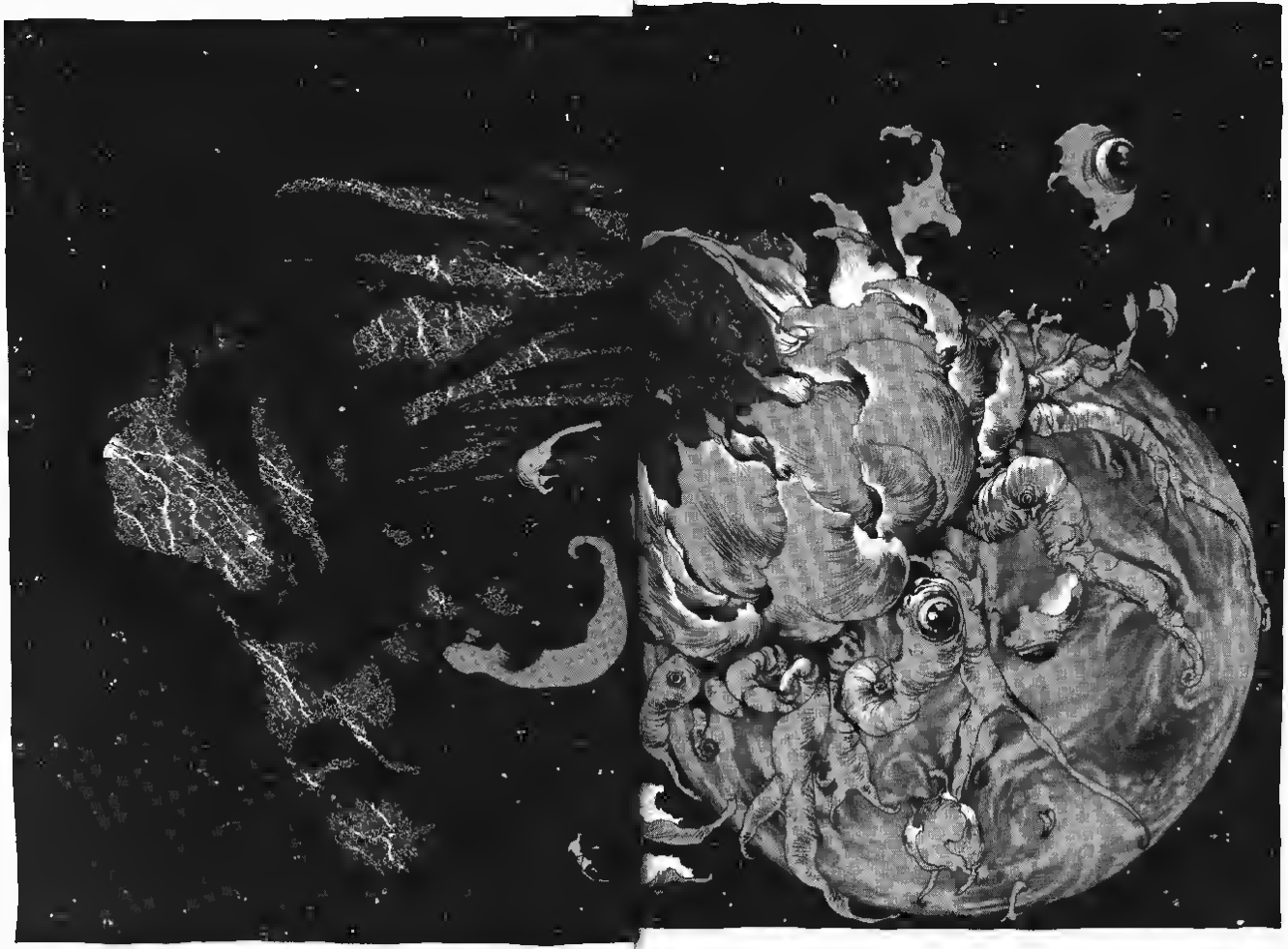
WELL, WELL, WELL!
PLEASE ACCEPT MY APOLOGIES, SUSANO
I IGNORED YOUR WARNINGS PRAY TELL ME WHAT IS HAPPENING IN THE WORLD?
THE WORLD'S FATE WILL BE DETERMINED IN TWENTY HARMONICS
...BY ME!
I'VE FINALLY FIGURED OUT SOMETHING THAT'S ALWAYS BOTHERED ME
BOTHERED YOU?
I ALWAYS WONDERED WHY A GOD LIKE ME-- VIOLENT WILD, AND UPSTART-- EVEN EXISTS
WHEN I SAW THE SUPER-NAGA, I FELT AS THOUGH I WAS DESTINED TO DESTROY IT
BUT I WAS WRONG

I'M MERELY THE COSMIC COUNTER-PART OF A QUIET CREATIVE FORCE— A FEMALE DEITY
OF YOU, PRINCESS KUSHI-NATA !
SOMETHING I DON'T GET A CHANCE TO HEAR !
OF ME ?!
YES, AND I'VE GOT A PROPOSAL TO MAKE
ONLY 6 MORE MINUTES LEFT
I'LL STOP BEING DESTRUCTIVE
IF YOU'LL STOP WEAVING NAGAS
AH, BUT HOW THEN WILL WE ELIMINATE ALL THIS NEGATIVE KARMA ?
GOOD AND EVIL ARE BOTH GENERATED BY OUR FORM, OUR WORDS AND OUR MINDS
YOUR DESIRE TO DO GOOD TO DESTROY NEGATIVE KARMA TRAPS BOTH GOD-FORCES AND NAGAS IN THE REACTOR WHICH PLAYS INTO THE HANDS OF AN EVIL DEITY
17 To Go

WHEN GOOD DEEDS ARE TOO PLENTIFUL, THE SPIRIT IS CONSTRAINED IN A MERE SHELL -- A "SORCERER'S SHELL" -- DEVOID OF ALL PHYSICAL DESIRE.
...AND WITHOUT KARMA TO PUNISH SIN, PEOPLE OVER-INDULGE IN PLEASURE, AND LOSE THEIR ABILITY TO DISCRIMINATE BETWEEN GOOD AND EVIL. RATHER THAN DESTROY NEGATIVE KARMA, IT'S BETTER NOT TO CREATE IT!
IS LEFT...
SO I'M GOING TO USE TSUMUKARI HERE TO ELIMINATE YOUR OBSESSION WITH SAVING THE WORLD!
WHSSHH
ER... ONLY FIFTEEN HARMONICS TO GO SIR!
WHOK
HGNK!
WHY DO YOU NOT LET ME CONTEMPLATE IN PEACE?
'CAUSE I'M THE GOD OF DESTRUCTION, THAT'S WHY!
HYAA!!

FSSSHHSSSH

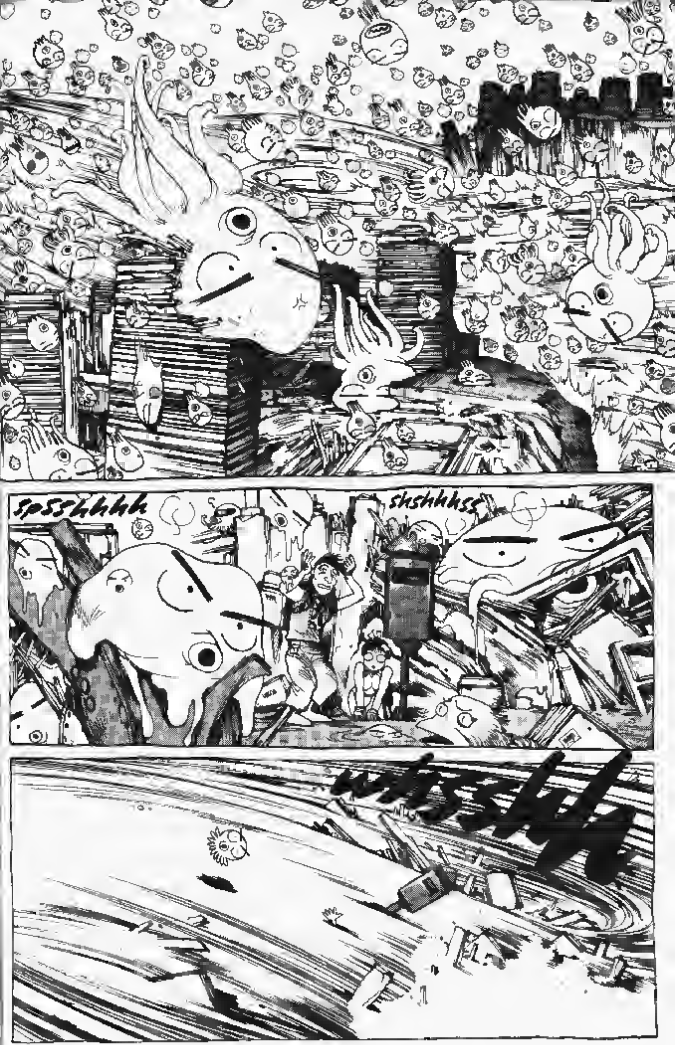

OH NO! EVERY-THING'S RUINED !
WAAAH! COMMANDER RONNEL...!!



YA HA HA!

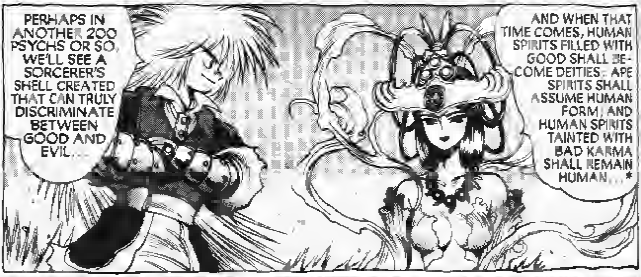
CRASH
WHKROOOM
BKOOOM

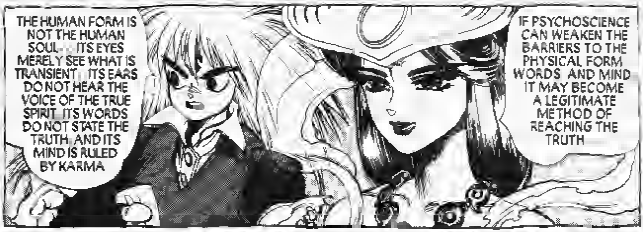
WHOOOMB
SPLOCK


spsshhhh
shshhhss

kiff - kaff UGG
!
GOOD GOD! THE YAMATA EMPIRE HAS

DON'T WORRY FUZEN. LET HER ABSORB THE NAGA FORCE FOR A WHILE AND SHE'LL SOON BE ABLE TO CAST SOME POWERFUL SPELLS AGAIN
IN A FEW PSYCHS SHE'LL RETURN TO THE SAME DAUGHTER YOU HAD BEFORE SHE STEPPED IN THE DHARMA CIRCLE
SNFF IF ONLY I HADN'T TRANSFERRED MY NAGA DHARMA-QUATION TO HER
NO, FUZEN... SHE STEPPED IN MY DHARMA CIRCLE...
O LORD SUSANO !
HEBIME ?! YOU'RE STILL ALIVE ?
O SUSANO !
IS IT TRUE PSYCHO-SCIENCE CAN'T SAVE THE WORLD ?
PSYCHO-SCIENCE IS ONLY A MEANS OF KNOWING THE TRUE GOD AND BECOMING ONE WITH IT
THROUGH GOOD DEEDS WHEN THE TIME COMES THE SELF BECOMES ONE WITH GOD AND PSYCHOSCIENCE WILL BE COMPLETED


PERHAPS IN ANOTHER 200 PSYCHS OR SO, WE'LL SEE A SORCERER'S SHELL CREATED THAT CAN TRULY DISCRIMINATE BETWEEN GOOD AND EVIL...
AND WHEN THAT TIME COMES, HUMAN SPIRITS FILLED WITH GOOD SHALL BECOME DEITIES. APE SPIRITS SHALL ASSUME HUMAN FORM, AND HUMAN SPIRITS TAINTED WITH BAD KARMA SHALL REMAIN HUMAN...*


THE HUMAN FORM IS NOT THE HUMAN SOUL... ITS EYES MERELY SEE WHAT IS TRANSIENT. ITS EARS DO NOT HEAR THE VOICE OF THE TRUE SPIRIT. ITS WORDS DO NOT STATE THE TRUTH, AND ITS MIND IS RULED BY KARMA.
IF PSYCHOSCIENCE CAN WEAKEN THE BARRIERS TO THE PHYSICAL FORM. WORDS AND MIND IT MAY BECOME A LEGITIMATE METHOD OF REACHING THE TRUTH

AS FAR AS I KNOW, ONLY THE BUDDHA NATURE CAN TRAVEL FREELY THROUGH TIME
BUT ALL SPIRITS HAVE A WINTER, AND ALL SPIRITS ALSO HAVE A SPRING. GO FORTH, HEBIME, WITH YOUR DREAMS
AND NOW IT'S TIME FOR ME TO PERFORM A LITTLE TRANSFORMATION MYSELF

* THERE IS A BUDDHA NATURE FOR EACH LEVEL OF THE SOUL. THERE ARE INFINITE LEVELS OF THE SOUL, AND INFINITE NUMBERS OF CORRESPONDING BUDDHA NATURES. THIS SPIRITUAL HIERARCHY FURTHER SUBDIVIDES THE LEVELS EXISTING BETWEEN APES AND GODS. THE PHYSICAL BODY IS ONLY A MANIFESTATION OF THE SPIRIT.

FAREWELL, MERE MORTALS !!
UNTIL WE MEET AGAIN ...
FWAP

SHI
RAK
HA HA
HA HA
HA HA
HA HA HA HA
HA

PILLARS OF SALT
I KNOW! THE GODS WERE USING THEM AS A PHYSICAL STRUCTURE TO MATERIALIZE AROUND
THEY MUST CONTAIN A POWERFUL DIVINE ENERGY. SO IF I JUST COLLECT A LITTLE OF IT
HEBIME YOU FOOL! DON'T YOU EVER LEARN ?!
I'M GOING TO USE MY LEFT BRAIN AND PSYCHO-SCIENCE TO SAVE THE WORLD!
YOU CAN GO AHEAD AND TRY TO SAVE THE WORLD USING YOUR RIGHT BRAIN AND THE NAGA RITUALS, FUZEN'
WBLOOSH
HA HA HA!
THE WORLD'S NOT SO SIMPLE AFTER ALL EH HEBIME ?!
HOW DARE YOU LAUGH !

dingg ♪
eh?
YYAWWN! WOW I SLEPT LIKE A LOG
AAAH... I FEEL GREAT!
WHAT'S THIS? MY DEAD DADDY? DOES THAT MEAN I'M IN HELL?
SESKA LISTEN
SMAK
I'M NOT DEAD, YOU STUPID BRAT!
MAYBE YOU WERE POSSESSED BY AN EVIL SPIRIT. BUT I NEVER KNEW HOW VIOLENT, RUDE, AND SHAMELESS YOU WERE!
I SHOULD HAVE TAUGHT YOU BETTER MANNERS!
LOOK! THE SUN'S OUT! I CAN SEE THE SKY AGAIN!
HA! HA!
YOUR MAJESTY, PLEASE ACCEPT MY LIFE IN APOLOGY FOR NOT BEING ABLE TO SAVE THE POOR EMPRESS.
AW DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.
JUST DON'T TELL ANYONE SHE EXPLODED WHEN ALL HER INTERNAL BAD KARMA MATERIALIZED
NOT EXACTLY BIG NEWS AROUND HERE
SHOGUN TO ALL SURVIVORS! REPORT IMMEDIATELY!

GOOD LORD!
AND FURTHERMORE THAT'S NOT HE ONLY THING I'M PISSED ABOUT! I CAN'T BELIEVE THE SHOGUN'D RESIGN HE ME
SESKA!
KRANGG
THUD
SESKA! THANK GOD YOU'RE ALL RIGHT
WHO THE HELL ARE YOU?
jingg♪
SHOGUN!! YOUR MAJESTY!!
WHY IT'S HIS MAJESTY ZOKOKU! AND HE'S SAFE!
WHO THE HELL ARE YOU AND HOW DARE YOU LAY A HAND ON MY DAUGHTER?
WHOK
OH SESKA I WAS SO WORRIED ABOUT YOU
Y-YOU WERE?
FORGIVE ME MASTER FUZEN
BUT I WAS OVERCOME WITH JOY

I MUST BE DREAMING AGAIN
NO P PAVE SEEN ONES AS SOON AS THE NAGA REACTOR INC DENT WAS OVER I PLANNED O ASK YOUR PERMISSION TO
WHY YOU SLYER THINGVET DEVIL I'VE SEEN YOU HANG NG AROUND HERE BEFORE!
I MAY BE DREAMING BUT I CAN'T LOSE THIS OPPORTU-NITY!
COM MANDER RONNE
OH RONNE! I TOO HAVE HAD THOUGHTS ONLY OF YOU ALL THIS TIME
DEAREST SESKA
SEE? THE NAGA FORCE STABILIZES KARMA IS REDUCED AND ALL OF A SUDDEN SPRING ARRIVES
B-B-BUT SESSIE-BABY ~SNIFF~ WHAT ABOUT US?
REMEMBER ME?
A LOVE TRIGHT
SNIFF
AT LAST I SURVIVED

THE SUPER-NAGA WAS DEFEATED AND THE YAMATA EMPIRE SANK OUT OF SIGHT
AT THE BOTTOM OF WHAT WE NOW CALL THE PACIFIC OCEAN THE SUPERNAGA CONTINUES TO EXPAND WAITING FOR ITS DAY TO COME AGAIN
THE STORY OF HOW THE NAGA-SERPENT COMPLETELY DISINTEGRATES AND HOW SPRING FINALLY COMES TO ALL BEINGS TAKES PLACE 5.67 BILLION YEARS LATER

WHY 5.67 BILLION YEARS LATER YOU ASK ?
THAT'S A STORY FOR ANOTHER DAY
The End.